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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

REPORT NO.

INFORMATION REPORT

CD NO.

COUNTRY Greece

DATE DISTR. 10 July 1950

SUBJECT Greek Government Upset Over Plastiras
Release of Certain Communists

NO. OF PAGES 2

PLACE
ACQUIRED 25X1ANO. OF ENCLS.
(LISTED BELOW)DATE OF
INFO.SUPPLEMENT TO
REPORT NO.~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

- 25X1X 1. On 5 July 1950, Minister of Public Order Petros Garoufalas stated that he was resigning that day in protest against what he termed the "arbitrary action" of the Greek Prime Minister on 3 July, when the latter permitted the release of 96 Communists from Makronisos and the release of 16 others from the Athens Hospital (not including Gavrielides), without the prior consent of the Minister of Public Order. The release was effected by a special order of the Prime Minister "for reasons of health", presumably under pressure of certain leftist deputies, such as Zaccas, Merkouris and Manettas (all Plastiras deputies).
2. When Garoufalas was advised of the release of the Communists, he immediately protested to George Papandreou, who on 4 July advised the Prime Minister that this was in violation of the basic policy of the coalition government.
3. On 5 July a conference was held among George Papandreou, Constantine Tsouderos and the Prime Minister, and attended by Garoufalas, at which Plastiras admitted that his action had been in violation of the basic policy of the coalition government; he also agreed to use the proper channels in the future.
4. Due to the strong personal feelings existing between the Prime Minister and Garoufalas, the latter will resign as Minister of Public Order, and will take over the Ministry of the Interior; Papandreou will become Minister of Public Order. *
5. Garoufalas explains the arbitrary action taken by the Prime Minister as being due to the latter's failure to understand the immediate danger inherent in releasing the Communists from exile, and the strong pressure exerted by leftist deputies. The Prime Minister himself sees no immediate danger from the release of Communists.
6. The above changes temporarily solve the government crisis. Other issues, such as the appointment of Pistolakis as Director of the Agricultural Bank of Greece, and the release of Constantine Gavrielides and other important Communists from exile, continue to give rise to considerable unrest in government circles.

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7. Demetrios Lambrakis, for the first time since the formation of the present government, in a leading article in Vima of 5 July, attacks the Plastiras Government on the ground that it failed to meet basic issues. Confidence in the Government was generally weakened as a result of the series of disagreements which occurred between Plastiras and Papandreou during the past month.

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[REDACTED] Comment: [REDACTED] reported a statement issued by George Papandreou regarding his assumption of the Ministry of Public Order, and the appointment of Garoufalas as Minister of Internal Affairs. He also stated that, with regard to the question of the appointment of Pistolakis as Director of the Agricultural Bank of Greece, the Prime Minister's order will be carried out. He explained that the Communists who, according to press reports, had been released from Makronisos were tubercular internees who have been transferred to hospitals.

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